

BULLETIN
OF
THE MARITIME LIBRARY INSTITUTE

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Acadia University Library
Wolfville, Nova Scotia

THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Fourth Annual Conference of the Maritime Library Institute will convene at Charlottetown, P.E.I., June 22-23. The Island will look its loveliest, and the programme promises entertainment that will surely refresh the souls of tired librarians. Let us have a large attendance. Will those who wish hotel reservations please write Mr. Bramwell Chandler, Superintendent Prince Edward Island Libraries, Charlottetown, P.E.I.

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PROGRAMME
FOR THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE
MARITIME LIBRARY INSTITUTE

June 22

a.m. 9:30 - 12:30	Registration, minutes, reports, etc.
p.m. 2:00 - 4:30	Miss Teresa Sears - "The Place of Pamphlets in the Library" Symposium on Reading Interests - Miss Eugenie Archibald, Chairman. Miss Vaughan (St. John): What people read in a large town Miss Gill (Charlottetown): What people read in a small town Mrs. Robert Donahoe (Souris): What people read in the country Others
4:30 - 7:30	Visit to Keppoch Beach, Charlottetown Harbour
7:30 - 9:30	Address of Welcome - Hon. Mark R. McGuigan, Minister of Education Motion picture - "The Making of a Book" Miss Doreen Harper - "Government Document Holdings in the Libraries of the Maritime Provinces"

June 23

a.m. 9:30 - 12:00	Miss Dorothy Cullen - "The Selection of Books for Children"
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June 23 (continued)

a.m. 9:30 - 12:00

Open Forum

Suggested topics: Publicity for the library
A union catalogue for the Maritime Provinces
Book agents and book buying

p.m. 1:30 - 5:30

Tour: Charlottetown to Summerside to Borden and return

8:00 - 10:00

Womens' Institute Convention

Dr. Kingsley Roberts, N. Y. Cooperative League of U.S.A.
"Cooperative Medicine"

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THE MACDONALD MEMORIAL LIBRARY
DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY, HALIFAX

by

M. Josephine Shannon

Dalhousie University was founded in 1818, but owing to lack of funds many years passed away before it was solidly established and able to do the work for which it was intended. During this chequered period when the old stone building on the "Grand Parade", the original home of Dalhousie, was used by turns as a museum, a post-office, a cholera hospital, and for various other purposes, there was, of course, no question of a library; but even when the College was reorganized in 1863 and really began its notable career, a library was still wanting. With so many other ways of using its slender income there was little to spare for books.

According to the University Calendar, the Library was founded in 1867, "as the result of an appeal made by the Rev. George M. Grant," but the response was evidently neither very enthusiastic nor very generous. An old student of the late eighteen-seventies recalls that "there was a small library; not many books that a youngster of sixteen or seventeen cared to read. I remember," he says, "Milman's histories, the Koran, a Sunday at Home or a book of that stamp. Professor De Mille was librarian and kept tab on the books taken out - not a hard job at all." Professor De Mille was professor of history and rhetoric at Dalhousie and the somewhat distinguished author of sundry novels and several once popular books for boys. Things were little better in the early years of the next decade. Dr. Eliza Ritchie, one of the first and most distinguished women graduates of Dalhousie, used to tell of the difficulty the students had to get the required books, and of the kindness of the various professors in lending them their own personal copies.

Some improvement came in 1887 when the College - it had not yet learned to call itself a university - moved to a new home on Carleton Street, for a spacious room was assigned to the Library and the collection began to grow. In 1889 a young professor, full of talent, full of enthusiasm for his profession, came to Dalhousie to fill the Chair of English language and literature. He realized more clearly than anyone else the importance of the Library and its needs, and set to work in a practical fashion to improve its condition. Many of the books still on the shelves of the Library bear on their bookplates the inscription "Presented to the Library from the proceeds of a series of lectures on Shakespeare by Dr. A. MacMechan." He not only gave books himself, but he inspired the various classes that passed through his hands

with the desire to do likewise, and some of the most valuable reference books on the shelves came from this source. Many other people have been generous to the Library. Some have given books and some money - even large sums of money - but, on the whole, none have done more than he to foster its growth and to enrich the collection through his wide knowledge and fine taste. Although the Library bears the name of Macdonald Memorial from the fine old Scotchman who conferred such distinction on Dalhousie, and who bequeathed \$2,000 to the Library, it is scarcely less a memorial, though unnamed, of the late Dr. MacMechan.

The University moved again in 1915, this time to a beautiful situation on the outskirts of the city. One of the first buildings erected here was the Macdonald Memorial Library, a plain but attractive edifice in the Georgian style. As soon as it was occupied, the books were all re-catalogued by the Library of Congress system. The stacks were not wholly completed until 1930. They are of marble and steel throughout and are absolutely fireproof. The chief feature of the Library building is the Reading Room, a stately apartment with great fireplaces at either end. Its long harmonious lines are full of grace and dignity. Low bookcases, intended to hold the reference collection, run along the walls. During the session the room is filled with students and there are few among them who do not appreciate the charm of their surroundings. Yet those from outside the city never really see the room at its best. In summer when the sunlight falls softly through the green of the waving trees outside, lighting up the portraits on the walls and bringing out the gay colours of the bookbindings, and when through the open windows there steals the perfume of new-mown grass, there is a wonderful atmosphere of peace and beauty about it most appealing to the chance scholar who comes to browse among the books.

It would be impossible in this brief sketch to speak of all the events in the history of the Library, or to enumerate all the gifts that have been showered upon it, beginning with the generous benefactions of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Rockefeller Foundation. But there are two deserving of special mention.

In 1928 Judge Patterson of New Glasgow, together with his three sisters and a brother, founded the Rev. George Patterson, D. D. Travelling Library in memory of their father. This was a very important event in the history of the Library, for, as a consequence, its usefulness ceased to be merely local but became extended to cover all the Maritime Provinces, thus influencing the life and thought of people in remote and isolated places. Last year twenty-four boxes, each containing thirty books, were sent out and received an eager welcome from hungry readers starved for good literature.

In 1933, Dr. William Inglis Morse of Cambridge, Massachusetts, began a succession of gifts which have greatly enriched the Library. Valuable books, rare old prints, maps and pictures, precious manuscripts and letters came from this generous friend of the University. A special room was set aside to house these treasures, and Dr. Morse provided its entire furnishings: table, chairs, bookcases, even waste paper holders, all of solid mahogany. One of his latest gifts was a collection of old Bibles, prayer books, etc., made by the noted English bookbinder, Douglas Cockerell, and bought from him by Dr. Morse for about \$3,000. The chief value of the books lies in their rare and beautiful old bindings, some by French and Italian binders of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and others by the famous English bookbinders such as Samuel Mearne and Roger Payne.

Such is, in brief outline, the history of the Macdonald Memorial Library up to the present time. It is a far cry from the days when the Library consisted mainly

of Milman's works, the Koran and the Sunday at Home to the present day when the stacks house a fine collection of over fifty-three thousand volumes. But the history is not ended. It is still being made, and who can say what the next twenty-five or thirty years may have to record.

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WHAT ABOUT RURAL LIBRARIES?

By Bramwell Chandler, M. A.
Superintendent Prince Edward Island Libraries

The free public library is a true native of the North American Continent. Yet, in common with many social services, it has a stiff fight for an adequate share of the public purse, and is usually one of the first to be hit by so-called economy measures. Even the wealthiest cities in Canada and the United States have a struggle to get enough new books and replace old ones as they wear out. The latest figures available for Canada show that our per capita cost of public libraries is 18 cents a year,-- less than 2 per cent of the cost of public schools, and about 10 per cent of the cost of universities and colleges. The United States spends 37 cents a year per capita for library service. A dollar a year per capita is accepted as a reasonable figure for good library service.

The American Library Association estimates that forty-five million Americans are outside the reach of public libraries. Also that of 3100 counties in the United States less than 300 have county-wide library service. That means that most of these forty-five million Americans are rural people. In Canada the story is more serious. About 78 per cent of the population of the Maritime Provinces are rural people. Out of 36 counties 3 have county-wide library service. These three spend only 25 cents per capita a year.

Significant are the comparisons made above between Canada's expenditures on libraries and colleges. The amount spent on public libraries is one-tenth of the cost of universities and colleges. In other words, in a country committed to a democratic form of society we have the old aristocratic view of education, giving every opportunity to the few, while denying to the great mass of our people, young and old, the heritage of a civilization built up by the common effort of all. How can such a policy, if the situation can be dignified by that term, produce other than evil results for our country, as already evident in our lack of political cohesion, in the increasing provincialism of the Canadian in relation to his fellow countrymen and the rest of the world as well, in his attitude toward music, art, and most forms of culture generally. It surely should be apparent to us all that democratic principles must be applied to our educational and cultural life if we are to survive as a nation.

In the midst of the Canadian desert librarians can but look with envy on the proposals now before Congress for Federal grants-in-aid of library service for rural areas in the United States. Two million dollars has been asked for next year, four million for the year after, six million for each of the succeeding three years, to be allocated to the states in proportion to the rural population. The New York TIMES comments on this as "one of democracy's best insurance policies".

Granted the need for rural libraries, the question most commonly asked is - Will rural libraries work? The answer is enthusiastically - Yes. As we come to the

end of the fifth year of operation of the Prince Edward Island Libraries we can say without reserve that our people know that library service is worth while and that it is worth paying for by the community. Based on our circulation figures for last year the fact arises that three books per capita were read, and nine books for each registered reader. In a rural area, moreover, circulation statistics are much too conservative. For example, in one branch library a man comes in on Saturday evenings with an empty suitcase and returns to his community with a load of books presumably for his family, as the books are checked out on the reader's cards of his numerous children, while actually the books are passed from family to family through the district. A study of this type of "bootleg" circulation is being made at present, and the results so far have been quite cheering.

Women's Institutes, study clubs and schools, and isolated individuals present a constant and clamoring demand for books. The circulation of books in rural schools in the first three months of 1938 has just doubled that of the same period in 1937.

A closely integrated regional library can also be a rallying point for many cultural activities in rural communities. Given the organization and its every day contact with the community, many developments are possible that otherwise would be impracticable, or at least much handicapped. Through the Library Headquarters it has been possible for the Adult Education League to put over in a remarkably short time a study group programme of rural self-help on cooperative problems following the pattern of the St. Francis Xavier University Extension Department, and on farming methods. With the Headquarters as administrative centre close contact has been kept in the past two years with over 300 study groups involving some 4,000 members. A vital pamphlet collection was organized, and each branch keeps a shelf for the special books and magazines needed by study clubs. To these people their branch library has an immediate and urgent value which they will not now forego. With nearly 30 credit unions established and other cooperative activities in preparation, the importance of study group work increases. During the next month the library bookmobile will be parked three or four evenings a week outside community halls or dimly lighted schoolhouses.

A start in visual education was made during the past winter. Beginning primarily as a means of providing interesting variety to meetings in rural communities, this project is developing into a valuable service. It is planned to build up a library of filmstrips which will be lent on the same terms as books, to community organizations such as Farmers' and Women's Institutes, schools and study groups. These organizations get together to purchase a filmstrip projector for the district. The National Parks Bureau has made the library a depository for its motion picture films.

Other plans which the library might well undertake include a travelling art display similar to that worked out by the Extension Department of the University of Alberta.

The activities of the rural library must of necessity be more general than those of the urban library, partly because there are so many things to be done with nobody there to do them, and partly because by reason of its internal organization the rural library is particularly well fitted to do them. At any rate our experience here has shown us that the rural library can make the pattern of rural life richer and more colorful and that it can adapt itself to the needs of its public without losing its standard of efficiency.

THE LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC LIBRARY
AT CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I.

By Jean C. Gill, Librarian

The Legislative Library had its beginning with the establishment of the Legislature of Prince Edward Island in the thirteenth year of the reign of His Most Excellent Majesty King George the third, A. D. 1773.

A library is and always has been an important adjunct of a Legislature. Its growth was at first slow, and comprised only such books as were necessary to conduct the business of the Assembly with propriety and intelligence. The Rector of St. Paul's Church served as a Chaplain for the Legislature and also acted for many years as librarian.

The library occupied several rooms in the Colonial Building where the Legislature meets every year.

In a report of 1902, which covered previous years, the library showed considerable growth. Six hundred and forty-five books and pamphlets, mainly Government publications, had been added to the library. New book-cases were obtained and the rearrangement of books by subject according to the decimal classification was carried out.

In October, 1900, the Honourable Thomas Walker Dodd left a bequest of \$3,500 for a Public Library. This, with the accumulated interest, amounted to \$5,000 by the time the library was put into operation.

In May, 1905, a minute of Council was passed by the Provincial Government as a result of the memorial submitted to them by the trustees of "The Dodd Library Trust" authorizing the placing of the Dodd books and cases in the present Legislative Library until such time as an outside public library could be started in Charlottetown.

New book cases were installed and some 300 volumes were purchased dealing with scientific works, history, memoirs and works relating to Canada. Quoting from a clipping of February 1906, - "The change in the arrangement of the rooms comprising the Legislative Library is almost completed. It is with sincere pleasure that many people look forward to the reopening of the library which will be more gratifying because of the increased value which the addition of the Dodd Library will impart."

In March, 1925, we received a bequest of \$2,200 for the buying of books. This, with the interest of the Dodd bequest, is our only source of revenue for the buying of books. The Legislative Library is maintained by a grant from the Provincial Government. At that time our circulation for the year numbered 20,649 books, averaging 1,720 books a month.

At the death of Mrs. Robert Harris in March, 1928, we received a very generous bequest of \$20,000 towards the building of a Public Library and Art Gallery, to be known as the "Robert Harris Memorial Gallery". This was supplemented by grants of \$10,000 from the Government and the City, who also provided the site. This was completed in February, 1930. In the Art Gallery hang some fifty-five pictures, the work of the late Robert Harris.

We moved into our new building March 10th, 1930. We had a marked increase in our circulation. In 1931 we gave out 42,000 books, an increase of 8,000 over 1930.

In June, 1934, and part of July we were closed for renovation in order to have the necessary equipment to accommodate the 4,000 new books from the Carnegie Library Demonstration. Of the 4,000 volumes 1,000 were children's books. Since then we have been receiving a constant service of books and have access to the whole collection.

We opened on July 16th, 1934. Our circulation for the day numbered 310 books. It has steadily increased, - 1933: 53,971 books; 1934: 65,821 books (June and part of July closed).

In 1934 we started a new registration and now we have almost 8,700 registered borrowers.

The circulation for the year 1937 numbered 77,548 books; our monthly circulation averaged 6,462 books. In 1936 our non-fiction circulation was 27% of the total circulation; in 1937 it increased to 30%.

Our daily attendance of patrons for reading purposes has greatly increased, so much so that the need of a children's room is apparent. In our juvenile department the circulation for the year 1937 numbered 13,105 books, a slight decrease over the previous year which we feel is owing to the crowded quarters mentioned above, and the fact that the children are not receiving the attention they should.

We are looking forward to making some alterations to the Library in the way of moving our book stacks which will add greatly to the appearance of the Library as well as give added space.

The Library is open six days of the week as well as two evenings.

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NOTES AND PERSONALS

On March 16 last our oldest associate member, Miss Adelaide P. Fitch, passed away at her home in Saint John, N. B. During her long life Miss Fitch had done excellent work as a writer. The intellectual development of the Maritime Provinces was always near her heart, and when the Maritime Library Institute was organized, she soon became one of its members and gave it her devoted interest until her death.

As we go to press we are still uncertain as to whether the M.L.I. will be represented at the Annual Conference of the Ontario Library Association, which meets at Toronto May 23 and 24. Mrs. John Stanfield, our former President, formerly of Truro, N. S., and now of St. Genevieve, Quebec, writes that it is possible she may attend.

The Sixtieth Annual Conference of the A.L.A. will meet at Kansas City, Missouri, June 13-18, 1938. There will be keen discussion of the federal aid bill now before Congress, the first instance of a bill integrating library service with a general program of education.

Congratulations to Miss Marion Gilroy of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. She has been awarded a Carnegie grant-in-aid for 1938-39 enabling her to spend a year in the study of Library Science at Columbia University. Several times recently Miss Gilroy has been heard on the subject of regional libraries in broadcasts from the Halifax radio station.

A copy of the brief on library needs submitted to the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations by the Ontario Library Association has reached the editorial desk. We wish the M.L.I. could also have prepared and submitted its brief to the Commission at its hearings in Halifax, Charlottetown, and Fredericton. Some attempt was made at the hearing in each of these cities to bring the cause of the library situation before the commissioners, but we fear the attempt lacked co-ordination. This was inevitable, as the members of our Executive live long distances apart, and it was late when they were aroused to the task by letters from the secretary of the O.L.A. Some good was doubtless effected.

We learn that there is a Library Club at Woodstock, N. B., under the leadership of Miss Georgia Starrett, Librarian of the L. P. Fisher Public Library.

A story telling hour held on Saturday mornings at the new St. Croix Community Library at St. Stephen, N.B. for children from six to ten years is proving a great success.

Miss Mary Falconer, of the Dalhousie University Library staff, has broadcast from Halifax recently on children's books. A new library for young people has been organized in Halifax during the winter.

We are glad to welcome Mrs. George C. Roy of Saint John, N.B., as a new associate member of the M.L.I.